

# Fight over plan to cut chalets

A RESIDENTS' Association is to fight a plan to evict almost half the chalet owners on a council estate at Bovisand.

At present there are 104 chalets on the coastline estate but South Hams council has decided that the number should be cut to 60 as part of a plan to improve the estate.

Members of the Bovisand Residents' Association have already met the council's chairman Miss Brenda Breakwell to discuss the proposals and the already agreed ten per cent increase in chalet rents. They will continue to meet among themselves to fight the proposed reduction.

Last year the council removed all caravans from the approach to the Bovisand

chalet estate and now they intend to tidy up the estate itself.

Council officers have already been arranging the lay-out of the existing chalets to provide a more spacious look but this will mean that the owners of 44 chalets — probably the oldest and untidiest — will be served with notices to quit.

Mr John Yeo, the director of technical services, said that the reduction of chalets was partly because of the council's policy to tidy up the site and regulations controlling caravans and chalet sites.

He emphasised, however, that although the policy had been accepted in principle by the council no money had been allocated in the coming year's estimate for the work to be carried out.

He assured tenants that before notices to quit were served the council would consider calling a meeting with them to explain the proposals.

Although accepting they would oppose the scheme, Mr Yeo pointed out that they had to renew their tenancies annually and were therefore subject to losing their site every year.

# Holiday chalets must go, planner

**THE** hundred temporary chalets on the Bovisand estate should be replaced with better buildings when it is sold, says South Hams planning boss Mr Michael Carpenter.

The replacement should be part of planning restrictions on the sale, says Mr Carpenter, council director of planning, in a report to the council.

"My report spelled out the planning considerations that need to be applied," said Mr Carpenter today.

"I told the committee yesterday that when we sell the estate, we ensure that the buyer develops it in such a way that we achieve certain planning objectives."

The main point in his report concerns the 100 temporary chalets on the site.

"I said that we should want them replaced with better and more permanent buildings, in different locations," said Mr Carpenter.

## Giant

"I also felt that there should be a reduction in the number of the chalets. I suggested that there should be no more than 80."

The estate could be bought by a giant holiday camp chain — or by the local tenants' association.

The council, as owners of the 25-acre estate, leases sites to the 100 chalet owners, and these may be renewed for another year.

The council made the decision to sell last December because of the cost of bringing the site to a top standard.

# Bovisand battle looming?

ALREADY there are signs of public anger over ~~South Hams~~ District Council's decision to sell its Bovisand Estate.

Has it been reached in too big a hurry and without the public knowing exactly what the decision implies?

The people, of Plymouth especially are very interested. They have been enjoying free access to the nearby beaches and they could easily lose this if the estate is sold.

The estate was originally bought by the old Plympton Rural District Council, thus ending the toll the public had to pay for right of access.

But the toll principle has never been altered and could well be restored or used to bar access if the estate is sold for private development.

Plans for development after a sale, it is understood, envisage a village with even two-storey houses . . . and this in an area of outstanding beauty and doubtless contravening all Government conservation regulations.

It was to preserve such amenities and end skyline development that the district council compulsorily ordered the removal of wooden chalets nearby about two years ago.

District councillors already fear strong protests over the estate decision, especially from interested parish councils which were not consulted, and approaches for explanatory meetings have already been made.

Protests by Plymouth councillors are also not unlikely and in the end Devon County Council could feel forced to intervene . . .

. . . and it has the right to veto any decision.

# ABOUT TURN ON BOVISAND

**SOUTH HAMS District Council have scrapped their plan to sell the Bovisand chalet estate and are to negotiate a lease with the chalet owners.**

If the move is successful, it will mean the chalet owners will take over the cliff-top estate lock stock and barrel.

But the tough conditions to be incorporated in the deal will force the tenants to greatly improve the site, lay on drainage and sewers, reduce the number of chalets and insure the public access to the cliff and beach are maintained.

The about turn, which will be welcomed by the scores of locals objecting to the sale, was taken at a special meeting of the council's Lands Sub-committee and the Leisure and Recreation Committee in Totnes today.

The chalet owners who have formed themselves into a tenants' association will have to become a limited company to take on the mammoth task of inheriting the loss-making estate.

The new proposal was moved by Mr George South who said: "In the lease you can incorporate any covenant you wish and they will be enforceable by law."

By leasing rather than selling the council would maintain a degree of control to ensure the site was kept as public open space.

If the residents' association cannot, for financial or other reasons, take up the lease the future of the estate will be put back in the melting pot. Some councillors suggested that the chalets should be "razed to the ground" and the estate retained as an open space.

Mr John Squire said he had had informal talks with the residents and they were confident they could take over the running of the estate.

"The tenants are prepared to tidy the site and reduce the number of chalets to 80 and put in drainage and pipe on water."

The estate has been in existence before the war but in the 1950's Plympton Rural District Council took it over and increased the number of chalets.

South Hams District Council has been wanting to improve the estate for many years but saw the only way of doing it being to sell it. The lease proposals will have to be sanctioned by the full council before being put to the chalet owners.

# Bovisand chalet folk win battle

CHALET owners at Bovisand are today jubilant after winning a ten-year-old battle to redevelop their estate at a cost of £250,000.

Tom Bignell, managing director and company secretary, said today: "When I heard the negotiations were completed, I was obviously over the moon at the outcome. I went out to celebrate.

The small man has beaten bureaucracy. We are not millionaires, the Butlins or Pontins of this world, just a small group of people who are going to run this and make it work.

"It has been a long haul with a very slow motor in the engine, but nevertheless

commonsense has prevailed and we have now got what we want from South Hams District Council.

"They will be proud in eight years time to be owners of this estate because we are really going to do a good job there."

Mr Bignell, spokesman for Bovisand Park Ltd, said they had a lease from the council until 1992 for redevelopment of the estate, and then a further lease of 43 years.

## Terraced

The whole estate is being rebuilt. The development involves each of the 81 chalets there. Building work starts this September with the replacement of 33 units or chalets at the West Point of this mile-long estate and will be completed in three stages up to 1992.

The new properties will be terraced blocks of two, three, five and six units at a time, comprising two bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, shower unit, toilet and wash basin, connected to main drainage.

Other buildings will include a warden's quarters for the estate, and new St John Ambulance premises. Two new public toilets are also to be built by this new company, formerly known as the Bovisand Tenants Association.

Chalets have been on the site for 40 years. Before that people camped there in tents. Some ten years ago, South Hams District Council wanted to close the estate and bring in an outside developer like Pontins, or a large hotel complex, but they weren't interested.

# Costs anger chalet folk

A COSTLY scheme to give a Devon seaside spot a £¾m facelift is forcing some couples to abandon their lifelong holiday homes at Bovisand, near Plymouth.

Some people have reacted angrily to escalating costs at the developing Bovisand Park Estate.

Mrs Cynthia George, of Langdale Gardens, Muttley, said originally they were told the shell of their

new chalet would cost £3,000. "On this basis a lot of people decided to put down a deposit of £250. Now, the cost is approaching £7,000," she said.

Forty - three - year - old Frank Wotton, of Staddiscombe Road, said: "I was three months old when I first went there. I grew up there and it's a way of life for me. Losing Bovisand would be like someone

cutting your legs off. So I'm still going ahead but it will mean neglecting the house and the car.

Managing director Tom Bignell, of developers Bovisand Park Ltd, admitted the company had had "a few complaints" from the shareholders.

He blamed rising costs on inflation involving items like the roof, mains drainage, sewage, electricity and the road.